Supreme Court of Canada

Performance Report

For the
period ending
March 31, 2008

The Honourable R. Nicholson
Minister of Justice and
Attorney General of Canada

Table of Contents

Section I: DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW 1

A. Message from the Registrar. 1
B. Management Representation Statement. 2
C. Summary Information. 3
D. Summary Departmental Performance. 5

Section II: PERFORMANCE BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND RESULTS. 11

A. Process hearings and decisions without delay. 12
B. Independence of the Court. 15
C. Access to Court services. 16
D. Access to information. 19
E. Reliable payment processes. 20
F. Other indicators. 20

Section III: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION. 23

A. Departmental Link to Government of Canada Outcome Areas. 23
B. Financial Tables. 23

Section IV: OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST. 45

A. For further information. 45
B. Listing of statutory and departmental reports. 45
C. Legislation administered. 45

I: Departmental Overview

A. Message from the Registrar

As this Performance Report attests, the Office of the Registrar has met its goals and objectives for the period under review. Its stable mission from year to year allows it to remain focussed on the tasks at hand in order to provide Canadians with the quality of services expected from the highest court in the country. This requires the ongoing efforts and steadfastness of its dedicated staff.

Cases were managed efficiently, as the statistical information contained in this report underlines. This activity rests at the heart of the mandate of the Office of the Registrar and requires constant attention. It includes monitoring the effectiveness of, and compliance with, the Rules of the Supreme Court, assisting self-represented litigants with improved tools and guidelines, maintaining case records, managing motions and hearings, providing expert research services and legal analysis for the judges, supporting the preparation of bilingual reasons for judgments and publishing them on paper and on line. Given the important role of the Court, the Canadian public, the media, and the legal profession take a great interest in all the Court's activities. Feedback has been very positive. In particular, this year's survey of internal Library users confirms a high level of satisfaction with the services provided.

In the meantime, our modernisation program is bearing fruit. The Supreme Court of Canada can proudly showcase one of the most technologically-advanced and user-focussed courtrooms in the country, if not in the world. It allows for improved access to the Court by providing better sound, wireless connections and digital documents in the courtroom, as well as broadcast-quality digital recordings of the hearings. All this has been done with a view to serving the public, the litigants and the judges in a modern environment. These initiatives are part and parcel of the long term vision supported by the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada to bring the Court into the digital age. The success of the program is due to the hard work of all the staff of the Court and a great team effort, encompassing all the activities of the institution: from contracting to accommodation, from systems development to translation.

Planning, risk management and training are the necessary ingredients for the Office of the Registrar to succeed in its endeavours. Many efforts were expended by management and staff alike to improve integrated business planning, workforce training plans and business continuity planning during this period. These feed into the reporting activities of the Office of the Registrar, which received a positive preliminary rating within the Management Accountability Framework.

I have had the privilege of serving the Supreme Court of Canada and the Canadian population over the past 18 years as the Registrar of the Court and will be retiring shortly. I am most proud of the achievements of the Office of the Registrar and of the great team of people working at the Court, its foresight and motivation. I am confident that the Office of the Registrar is ready to rise to the challenges of the future.

Management Representation Statement

I submit for tabling in Parliament, the 2007-2008 Departmental Performance Report (DPR) for the Supreme Court of Canada.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles contained in the *Guide for the Preparation of Part III of the 2007-2008 Estimates: Reports on Plans and Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports*:

- It adheres to the specific reporting requirements outlined in the Treasury Board Secretariat guidance;
- It is based on the Supreme Court of Canada's Strategic Outcome and Program Activity Architecture that were approved by the Treasury Board;
- It presents consistent, comprehensive, balanced and reliable information;
- It provides a basis of accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities entrusted to it; and
- It reports finances based on approved numbers from the Estimates and the Public Accounts of Canada.

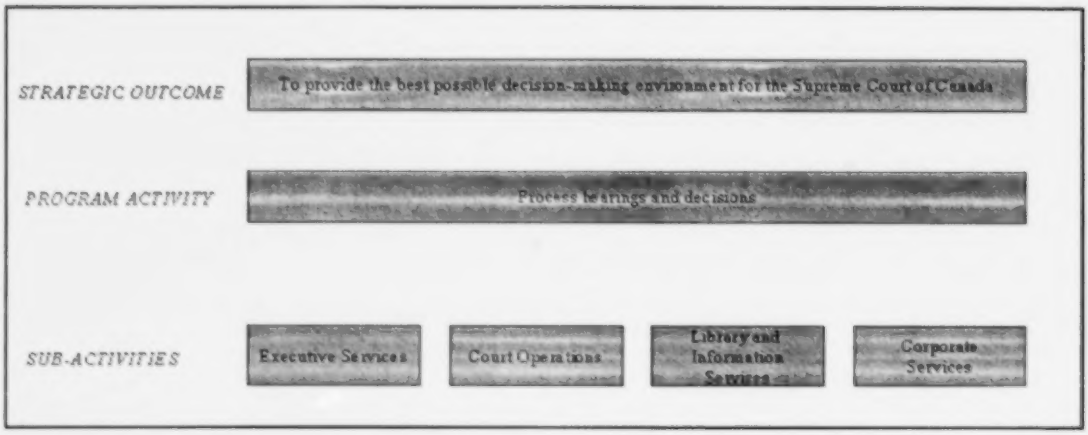
Name: _____
Anne Roland

Title: Registrar

Date: _____

C. Summary Information

Program Activity Architecture



Reason for Existence

As the final court of appeal, the Supreme Court of Canada serves Canadians by leading the development of common and civil law through its decisions on questions of public importance. The mandate of the Supreme Court of Canada is to have and exercise an appellate, civil and criminal jurisdiction within and throughout Canada, which it meets by hearing and deciding cases of public importance. In accordance with the *Supreme Court Act*, the Supreme Court of Canada consists of the Chief Justice and the eight Puisne Judges.

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada exists to provide the full gamut of services the Court needs in order to hear cases and render decisions, and serves as the interface between the litigants and the Court. The focus of this report is the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada.

More detailed information on the Court's responsibilities, the hearing process and judgments is available on the Internet (http://www.scc-csc.gc.ca).

Financial Resources ($ million)

2007-2008		
Planned Spending	**Total Authorities**	**Actual Spending**
31.8	33.1	30.7

Human Resources (Full Time Equivalents)

2007-2008		
Planned	**Actual**	**Difference**
191	194	3

Departmental Priorities

2007-2008		
Name	**Type**	**Performance Status**
1. Process cases without delay	Ongoing	Exceeded expectations
2. Court modernization	New (2007-08 to 2009-10)	Successfully met
3. Manage risk	Previously committed to	Successfully met
4. Build capacity	Previously committed to	Successfully met

Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome: To provide the best decision-making environment for the Supreme Court of Canada			
Program Activity: Process hearings and decisions			
	2007-2008		
	Planned Spending ($ millions)	Actual Spending ($ millions)	
	31.8	30.7	
Expected Results	**Performance Status**	**Contributes to the following priorities**	
• Process hearings and decisions • Ensure the independence of the Court • Improve access to the Court and its services • Provide the information base that the Court needs to fulfil its mandate • Reliable payment processes	• Exceeded expectations • Successfully met • Not met • Not met • Successfully met	• Process cases without delay • Court modernization • Manage risk • Build capacity	

D. Summary Departmental Performance

Operating Environment and Context

The context within which the Office of the Registrar must carry out its activities is continually evolving. The legal environment is becoming increasingly complicated and technological advancements place ongoing pressure on the Court to update its facilities and services.

Changes and trends in court administration include:

- **Continued focus on electronic exchange of information**. The general public has become more technically savvy, and more comfortable using electronic tools to carry out a wide variety of functions. Consistent with this broad trend, the public expects to be able to use electronic tools to interact with the Office of the Registrar's systems to obtain information and legal material. Judges and counsel are preparing their cases using electronic documents and require access to these documents electronically during hearings. As technological changes have brought computers into the Courtroom, the Office of the Registrar requires litigants to file the main documents in appeals in printed and electronic formats. While the Office of the Registrar is moving towards more electronic acceptance and processing of cases, the requirement for paper-based processes continues, and will continue for some time. As a result, parallel streams of case and information processing will be required.
- **Changes regarding access to court records**. A Model Policy for Access to Court Records in Canada was issued by the Canadian Judicial Council in August 2006. The Office of the Registrar undertook a project to develop a policy for access to Supreme Court of Canada records that would be suitable to the requirements of the Court and meet the privacy and access concerns of litigants, media and members of the public. A policy was drafted and consultations with stakeholders are underway. We expect the policy to be finalized in the Fall of 2008 to coincide with the introduction of electronic appeals.
- **Complexity of the legal environment**. Factors such as globalization and the growing influence of privacy, security, and human rights issues continue to increase the complexity of cases heard. More complicated motions are being filed, and the Court is frequently asked to deal with cases or issue rulings on an expedited basis. A growing number of applications for leave to appeal are being received from self-represented litigants, (25% in 2007). Addressing the needs of self-represented litigants stretches the resources of the Court.
- **Recent fluctuations in the caseload of the Court**. The workload of the Office of the Registrar in terms of caseload has been very stable over the last decade (an average of 83 appeals heard and 580 leave applications per year). However, in 2006, just over 500 leave applications were filed which lead to a reduction in the appeals heard in 2007 to 52. It would appear that this reduction was an anomaly as 602 leave applications were filed in 2007. We project that 582 leave applications will be filed and 85 appeals will be heard in 2008.

Overall Results of the Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar was successful in meeting most expectations identified in its 2007-2008 Report on Plans and Priorities. Section II of this report provides more detailed information on results. The highlights are included here, as follows:

1. **Process cases without delay.** The Office of the Registrar maintains statistics (see http://www.scc-csc.gc.ca/stat/pdf/doc-eng.pdf) on a monthly basis to determine average annual time lapses in three key areas:

   a. Average time between filing of application for leave and decision on application for leave;

   b. Average time between date leave granted (or date notice of appeal as of right filed) and hearing; and

   c. Average time between hearing and judgment.

   For 2007, the time lapse in each of the first two areas represented a decrease from the average of the preceding ten years: for the time between application for leave and decision, from 4.3 months to 3.5 months; and for time between date leave granted (or date notice of appeal as of right filed) and hearing, from 10.5 months to 9 months. However, the elapsed time between the hearing and judgment increased, from an average of 5 months to 6.6 months. The increase in the average time lapse between hearing and judgment can be attributed to different factors including the fact that very few judgments were delivered from the bench in 2007. The increase may also reflect the complexity of the cases heard by the Court. The Court works very hard to render judgments in a timely way, and it is expected that the average time lapse in 2008 will be below six months.

2. **Court modernization.** Court modernization is a multi-faceted program priority. At the highest level, the goal of the Court Modernization priority is to provide an optimum venue - the courtroom - for presenting and hearing cases, and to improve access to information before, during, and after hearings. This contributes to the Office of the Registrar's ability to provide the best decision-making environment for the Supreme Court. The first aspect of this priority is the modernization of the courtroom itself, in terms of audio-visual equipment, broadcast capability, information management and technology and the physical infrastructure. The bulk of this work was completed in 2007-08. Remaining phases of the project will include development of an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) for both corporate use and case related information in the courtroom during hearings. The final aspect of the priority is the development of the capability to accept electronic case files via a web-portal, if possible. Work on the latter two phases will commence in 2008-09 and continue until 2009-10.

3. **Manage risks.** The Office of the Registrar has made progress towards this priority by implementing an integrated approach for identifying, assessing and managing all risks facing the Court and the Office of the Registrar. A risk identification process is conducted annually at the senior management retreat, and mitigation strategies are developed as required. The

MAF assessment indicates additional effort is required, for example, to integrate risk information into business plans.

A significant risk over the past number of years has been the age and condition of audio visual equipment in the Courtroom, and the absence of modern information technology equipment. The audio visual equipment, while being regularly maintained, was old, and had service problems which have lead on occasion to some operational issues. The absence of information technology equipment has left the Court lagging behind lower courts, and has resulted in a continuous reliance on paper-based means of presenting cases. With the substantial completion of the first phase of the court modernization program, this risk has been significantly reduced.

Key activities undertaken during 2007-08 include:

- Establishment of a Project Management Office to mitigate risks inherent in the implementation of large scale complex projects, such as the modernization of the courtroom.
- The Business Continuity Plan was updated.
- Finalization of a security policy.
- A booklet describing emergency procedures was prepared and distributed to all staff and judges.
- Streamlining/updating agreement for policing services between RCMP and the Supreme Court.

4. **Build capacity**. This priority includes a number of elements, and progress was made in each of these as follows:

   - Further development of an integrated business and human resource planning process: Human resource, asset and information technology considerations were formally included as part of the strategic and business planning processes in 2007-08, which resulted in integrated plans, at the strategic level for 2008-09 to 2010-11, and at the business level, for 2008-09.
   - Internal communications: During 2006-07, the Office of the Registrar's governance structure was changed, with the result that certain internal committees were eliminated. One such committee was the communications committee. The internal communications activity is now coordinated by the Executive Services Branch. The Manager, Protocol and Secretariat Services is responsible for the management of the function, including the management of the intranet website, "Ernest", and ensuring information sent to staff is consistent and in conformity with the Internal Communication Policy. An Internal Communications Policy was drafted in 2007-08. The Official Languages Committee and Senior Management Committee reviewed the policy and changes were requested. The policy will be approved by Senior Management Committee in 2008-09.
   - Accommodation strategy: All of the Office of the Registrar's employees are housed in the Supreme Court building, which is at or near capacity. Given the heritage designation of

the building, it is not easy to make changes. During 2007-08, the Office of the Registrar, working together with Public Works and Government Services Canada, commissioned a study to look at accommodation options. In July 2007, the resulting report was issued. Subsequent to this, the Office of the Registrar has undertaken the assessment of the various options presented and is currently elaborating a proposed accommodation strategy. In the fall, the renovations to the East Entrance of the Supreme Court building were completed, providing barrier free access, an improved security control system and a space reflecting the heritage values and status of the institution.

II: Performance by Strategic Outcome and Results

1. The Office of the Registrar's Strategic Outcome and Program Activity

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court has a single strategic outcome - *to provide the best possible decision-making environment for the Supreme Court of Canada*. This single strategic outcome is supported by one Program Activity - *Process hearings and decisions*, defined as the provision of services the Court must have to render its decisions as the Court of last resort. The principal responsibilities of the Office of the Registrar are to provide a full range of administrative and support services to the Judges and to manage cases coming to the Court.

The expected results in support of this are:

- To process hearings and decisions promptly;
- To ensure the independence of the Court as an institution within the framework of sound public administration;
- To improve access to the Court and its services;
- To provide the information base that the Court needs to fulfill its mandate; and
- Reliable payment process for payments pursuant to the *Judges Act*.

The following table summarizes the resources planned and utilized in carrying out this program activity.

Program Activity:	**Process hearings and decisions**	
	Planned Resources	**Actual Resources**
Financial resources ($ millions)	$31.8	30.7
Human resources (FTE)	191	194

2. The Office of the Registrar's Performance

Performance indicators have been developed for each of the expected results. This section reports on the Office of the Registrar's performance against each indicator, and in so doing, against each expected result.

A. Process hearings and decisions without delay

Activity	Expected Result	Performance Indicators
Process hearings and decisions	Process hearings and decisions without delay	• Feedback re quality of service • Quality and availability of technology • Elapsed time for processing cases • Quality of library services

Since the fundamental and on-going priority of the Supreme Court is to hear cases and render decisions, it follows that the ultimate and fundamental priority of the Office of the Registrar is to process cases without delay. Key performance indicators are feedback regarding quality of service, elapsed time for processing cases, the quality of technology in place, and the quality of library services.

Feedback regarding quality of service. Stakeholder satisfaction is monitored on a qualitative basis through feedback from the Judges and the legal profession. During 2006/07, this was supplemented by a formal survey of clients' (counsel, agents and self-represented litigants) satisfaction with various Registry Branch services, including assessment of the scope, quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the services and information provided.

- **Feedback from the Judges**. The Registrar regularly confers with the Judges to assess their level of satisfaction regarding the quality and timeliness of professional and administration services provided to them by Court staff. Feedback has generally been very positive. In particular, in 2007-08 when significant changes were made to the courtroom, judges expressed overall satisfaction with the technology introduced, and with the improved broadcast quality that resulted from audio visual upgrades.
- **Feedback from legal community**. The Registrar regularly meets with external legal agents to obtain feedback on service delivery. For example, feedback is obtained through the Canadian Bar Association/Supreme Court of Canada (CBA/SCC) Liaison Committee, as well as committees such as the Court Ottawa Agents Practice and Procedures Committee (COAPP) and other informal communications with the legal community. Key ongoing requirements from counsel are the need for responsive and efficient service, and the demand for electronic access to information. Counsel have expressed their appreciation for the new technologies available to them in the courtroom, including wireless internet access.
- **Feedback from clients.** A survey of Registry Branch clients was conducted between February 1st and 23rd 2007. Clients were asked to provide feedback on the quality of Registry Branch services, hours of operation, communication channels, Registry Branch staff, and the SCC website. Their feedback was very positive. Three out of four respondents stated they were "very satisfied" with the service they received, while virtually all respondents (99%) were "satisfied" or "very satisfied". Areas for improvement were found to be the Rules of the Supreme Court of Canada, which could be more complete and clear, as could the guidelines for preparing the electronic copy of the factum on appeal. A self

represented litigant portal was developed and feedback has been extremely positive. All self represented litigants who contact the Court receive an information and instruction guide which helps them to prepare documents that conform to the requirements of the Rules of the Supreme Court.

The Court revised the Guidelines for Preparing the Electronic Appeal Documents and provided training for counsel and their agents in fall 2007. Questions and answers on how to prepare electronic appeal documents have recently been posted on the Court's website. In an effort to continue to offer the same level of service for in-person counter services, the Registry continues to collect feedback through Client Satisfaction Forms.

In April 2007, the Library participated in the LibQual+ Canadian Consortium benchmarking survey, as part of four Canadian government libraries involved in this major service quality study of over 200 academic and research libraries. The LibQual+ survey evolved from a conceptual model based on the SERVQUAL instrument, a popular tool for assessing service quality in the private sector. Only internal clients were surveyed. Participation rate, at 26%, was well above the consortial aggregated results of only 15%. The overall response was extremely positive, with no areas of library service rated below users' expectations. Improvements to the Library Intranet and delivery of electronic resources to enable legal research at the desk top have been made in response to needs identified in the survey.

Elapsed time for processing cases. The Office of the Registrar maintains monthly statistics on the Court's caseload, backlog and average time lapses between key events, and produces a public annual statistical report, which can be found at http://www.scc-csc.gc.ca.

Average time lapses over time for processing cases in 2007 and in the preceding ten years are shown in the table below. Even with a significant increase in the number of cases filed (from 506 in 2006 to 602 in 2007), the average time between filing an application for leave and the decision increased only slightly in 2007 to 3.5 months, below the average for the past ten years of 4.3 months. The average time between the date leave is granted and the hearing increased more significantly, although this too is still below the average for the past ten years, which was 10.5 months. The average time between the hearing and the release of the judgment increased in 2007, representing the third consecutive year this has increased. The increase in the average time lapse between hearing and judgment can be attributed to different factors including the fact that very few judgments were delivered from the bench in 2007. The increase may also reflect the complexity of the cases heard by the Court. The Court works very hard to render judgments in a timely way, and it is expected that the average time lapse in 2008 will be below the six month standard.

Average Time Lapses (in months)	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Between filing of application for leave and decision on application for leave	3.5	3.9	5.2	5.4	4.3	5.7	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.5
Between date leave granted (or date notice of appeal as of right filed) and hearing	10.9	12	11.1	12.5	11.4	12.2	10.5	9.4	9.1	7.7	9
Between hearing and judgment	2.8	2.8	5.4	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.1	4	5.2	5.9	6.6

Quality and availability of technology. Information technology continued to be a major focus during 2007-2008. Existing technology groupings include standard office/desktop tools, courtroom technology (e.g., Audio Visual equipment), in-house applications such as the Case Management System, off-the-shelf commercial applications (e.g., Human Resource Information System (HRIS), Free Balance, Library Management System), security, web applications and support hardware and infrastructure. Major modernization projects are underway. During this period, the courtroom's audio-visual systems were completely revamped and information technology was introduced in the courtroom. Still in progress are the introduction of an enterprise-wide EDRMS, a means to support electronic filing, and an upgrade to the Court's word processing software, in addition to regular ongoing updates and upgrades to IT infrastructure and desk top applications. In 2007-08, the Office of the Registrar introduced new IT Management approaches such as virtualization, moving to a ".Net" development standard, as well as implementing several enhancements to its IT security framework. The Microsoft Office Share Point Server 2007 Framework was introduced, and a successful IT Internal Audit was completed. All of these are in line with and directly contribute to the Office of the Registrar's modernization efforts.

Quality of library services. In addition to serving the Supreme Court, the Library provides services to lawyers appearing before the Court, to the Federal Courts (Federal Court of Appeal, Federal Court, Tax Court of Canada), to members of the Bar and, by special permission, to others in the legal field. Through a variety of resource sharing agreements with Law Society and Courthouse Libraries and through inter-library loan networks, the Canadian public is able to benefit from the historical and current legal collections in common and civil law. In 2007-08 the Library reviewed its Library Use Policy and extended access to students enrolled in law faculties. Additional promotion in the Carleton County and Gatineau bar associations has increased in-person visits to the library significantly. An Open House was held in the Library in November and an historical exhibit on the evolution of the Court was hosted in cooperation with Library and Archives Canada.

B. Independence of the Court

Activity	Expected Result	Performance Indicators
Process hearings and decisions	Ensure the independence of the Court	• Perception of institutional independence • Identification of potential conflict of interest

At the apex of the judiciary, the Court decides cases of public importance that affect Canadian citizens and governments. In this context, the Office of the Registrar must ensure that the institutional independence of the Court is clearly safeguarded within the framework of sound public administration.

Perception of institutional independence. Appropriate arms-length relationships must be maintained with Parliament, the Department of Justice and the Central Agencies. The Registrar regularly confers with the Judges to assess their level of comfort that the Supreme Court is maintaining its institutional independence. The Office of the Registrar also receives informal feedback from ongoing relationships with international, federal and provincial jurisdictions, and takes action where appropriate. The need for institutional independence is generally understood and respected.

The Court indirectly supports its institutional independence by its active participation in the international community of judges and jurists, and by acting as a focal point for foreign visitors interested in the administration of justice in Canada. The Court's jurisprudence is regularly considered by courts in other countries. The Court receives and organizes visits for many delegations from around the world, for sharing of information on modern court management processes (47 official visits in 2007). The Office of the Registrar staff and the Judges have also been participating actively in international associations by providing a selection of decisions from the Court's database for distribution to their members and attending their meetings to discuss issues of common interest.

Identification of potential conflict of interest. The Office of the Registrar has put in place controls to identify and track potential conflicts of interest on the part of the Judges, the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar. The *Rules of the Supreme Court of Canada* have been amended to require litigants to advise the Court of any perceived potential conflict of interest when filing documents. An automated tracking system ensures that Judges are not placed in a situation of perceived conflict of interest.

C. Access to Court services

Activity	Expected Result	Performance Indicators
Process hearings and decisions	Access to Court services	• Time to respond to requests for information • Effectiveness of rules • Quality of protocol services • Quality of electronic access to Court services and information • System availability • Provision of media access • Physical security

The Office of the Registrar must ensure that the Court is accessible and that it provides services and information to litigants and counsel in a timely manner. The survey on Registry Branch services (summarized in Section A, above) provided useful feedback on how clients view the accessibility of Court information.

Time to respond to requests for information. In large part requests for information were answered within established service standards. Feedback from stakeholders has been positive. There were few complaints. Improvements have also been made to the web site to facilitate access to information on a self-serve basis. Enhancements made during 2007-2008 include media web portals, an educational web portal and video, information management business rules for Judges' papers and a reworked University of Montreal web site for Court decisions (LexUM). In 2007-08, the Library, working in cooperation with LexUM, and through the generosity of the Law Foundation of Ontario, enhanced the website for the Court's decisions by commencing the digitization of the Supreme Court Reports from 1967 to 1985. In addition, through the generosity of the Law Foundation of Ontario and the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII), the Library added all decisions originating in Ontario from 1876 to the website.

General enquiries and requests for information by the public are increasing, resulting from a better-informed and demanding public and from the captivating issues debated in Court cases. In 2007, the Court Records staff responded to 2,637 requests from internal and external clients for information on Court related files and documents, and 7,413 files or parts thereof were retrieved for these clients. Through improved statistical reports, Court Records is now able to monitor service standards. Over 90% of external requests were dealt with within the established service standard of 48 hours. Phone calls at the Registry were also answered within established service levels by the receptionist. Registry staff answered 413 e-mails and sent a total of 526 letters, including 386 letters to self represented litigants. Only 5 to 6 % of the calls over a sample eight week period went to Registry voice mail. All calls, however, were returned within one business day.

The Court's web site provides the media and the public with current and complete information regarding the progress of all cases before the Court, parties and counsel involved, hearing timetables and all decisions on motions, applications for leave to appeal, and appeals. The Court issues regular news releases to announce major events in a case and schedules of hearings. As well the Court issues a Bulletin of Proceedings weekly during the Court year, which is mailed to subscribers and made available in electronic form through links on the web site. The Office of the Registrar also publishes the official Supreme Court Reports.

As is found to be the trend in most courts across the country, there are an increasing number of self represented litigants coming to the Court as shown on the table below. These litigants need more assistance than those who have counsel, putting extra demands on staff. The Office of the Registrar provides all self represented litigants who contact the Court with an information and instruction guide. The new 2007 guide includes samples of fill-in-the-blank application for leave, response and reply books that can be completed and filed with the Court. The self represented litigants who have access to the internet are referred to the Supreme Court of Canada website where they can access an information portal that allows them to download the PDF versions of sample books. The feedback has been positive and so far, 15 % of self represented litigants have used the samples in 2007 since the launch of the portal and new guide in June 2007. In 2007, 386 letters were sent to self represented litigants, 137 of them included information kits to assist them in putting together their application for leave to appeal.

Percentage of leave applications filed by self represented litigants

Years	Leave applications filed by all litigants	Leave applications filed by self represented litigants	% filed by self represented litigants
1999	585	111	19 %
2000	642	117	18 %
2001	621	117	19 %
2002	523	106	20 %
2003	550	92	17 %
2004	568	114	20 %
2005	544	103	19 %
2006	506	115	23 %
2007	602	149	25 %

Effectiveness of rules. Periodic revisions are made to the Rules of Practice of the Supreme Court of Canada. These are drafted after consultations with outside lawyers on the Court Ottawa Agents Practice and Procedures Committee (COAPP) and the Canadian Bar Association/Supreme Court of Canada (CBA/SCC) Liaison Committee. Overall, Court rules are effective and up to date. Draft amendments to the Rules will be circulated next year. These amendments will take into account changes in process as a result of electronic appeal hearings and changes suggested following the Registry survey.

Quality of protocol services. Protocol services include organizing special events of the Court (including receptions, dinners, conferences, lectures, and unveilings), receiving dignitaries and visitors officially invited by the Court (national and international), and providing assistance to Judges when travelling internationally on behalf of the Court. Overall, the feedback regarding the protocol services has been positive. Events are successful, and no major concerns have been identified. Service improvements are made on an ongoing basis.

Quality of electronic access to Court services and information. The Supreme Court website continued to be the object of enhancements that aimed at improving the timely availability of information about cases and hearings. Bilingual summaries are prepared for each leave application and posted on the Court's website, which is updated on a daily basis, with current case information. A web portal for self represented litigants was implemented in June 2007. Hard copy instruction packages were also updated. The Office of the Registrar continues to be fully committed to its phased approach to e-filing. With the successful implementation of the courtroom upgrades, and the pilot project for electronic hearings and counsel filing appeal documents on CD-ROM for all fall 2008 cases, the development of a web portal for electronic filing will be the next step.

Systems Availability. A key concern has been the dependability of audio-visual systems in the courtroom. With the completion of the upgrade to the courtroom systems, together with the acquisition of an emergency back-up system, this concern has been alleviated. Incidents have been virtually non-existent since October 2007, when the new systems were implemented.

Provision of media access. The lock up process for important judgment releases is now well-entrenched and suggestions for improvements in media relations are received via the Court's media committee. The upgrade to the courtroom audio visual systems has significantly enhanced the quality of broadcast hearings.

Physical security. Activities undertaken to maintain and improve security levels included:

- **Security Framework.** Security policies and procedures for the Office of the Registrar were developed or enhanced as appropriate. Further updates to the Office of the Registrar's Business Continuity Plan were undertaken.
- **Security awareness**. A security awareness program delivery agenda was formulated. Furthermore, the *Security Guide for the Judges of the Supreme Court of Canada* was updated and distributed in conjunction with one-on-one security briefings conducted with each judge. In addition, security tips and emergency procedures were developed and communicated to all employees and judges. Internal resources have also been allocated for the elaboration and delivery of a complete and ongoing security awareness program.

D. Access to information

Activity	Expected Result	Performance Indicators
Process hearings and decisions	Access to information	• Access to case information • Quality of storage, retention and preservation of Court information • Library collection

The Office of the Registrar undertook a number of initiatives to develop and implement a strategy for managing and accessing information, including the Intranet/Internet, systems for communicating information, repositories for the storage and handling of archival information, and preservation of electronic information (e.g., VHS, DVD, microfiche). Implementation also includes the information infrastructure (e.g., governance, documentation, and training). These improvements will reduce duplication of information, improve access to information, ensure better presentation of information and support knowledge sharing and transfer.

Access to case information. The Office of the Registrar must ensure ease of public access to information such as Court decisions, as well as ease of access by Judges and employees to historical case information and other legal documents. Case information is available in electronic format, although there are still limits to accessing electronic versions of documents. Enhancements to the Court's Case Management System are ongoing as users rely heavily on this application. The Office of the Registrar currently provides access to selected information from the Case Management System database through the website, and is exploring the possibility of expanding this access to additional information and documents, including the electronic versions of factums. Online reports are being created to satisfy the growing demand from counsel for information. Although we expected that the draft policy for access to court records, including access to factums on the Court's website would be implemented during 2007-2008, implementation has been delayed as a result of ongoing consultation with stakeholders.

Quality of storage, retention and preservation of Court information. The Office of the Registrar has a well established records management function for Supreme Court of Canada case files. An audit of the information management function was undertaken in 2004-2005, addressing both case and administrative records. The audit made a number of recommendations to be implemented over a four year period intended to make improvements in governance structures, control mechanisms, policies and practices, risk management and information for decision-making. Implementation of most of the recommendations has been completed, including extensive preparations for implementation of an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) in 2007-08. The EDRMS project has moved to implementation, and selected users can now use the system.

Library holdings. With approximately 350,000 volumes, the Library of the Supreme Court provides the research base for the Court. The Library's extensive collection comprises statutes, law reports, periodicals and treatises from major common and civil law jurisdictions, including Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, France and Belgium. Its print and microform holdings are supplemented by access to a vast range of electronic legal resources and databases. It is also enriched by a valuable collection of rare books printed in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries pertaining to the common law of England and the civil law of France.

In 2007-08 the Library began a comprehensive review of its Collection Development Policy, which is intended to identify subject areas within the collection that may be accessed electronically without the need to preserve a print collection in perpetuity. At present, over 93% of the cited references in the Court's decisions can be located in the Library's print collection. With the addition of electronic resources, the Collection is able to meet the needs of the Court 98% of the time.

E. Reliable payment processes

Activity	Expected Result	Performance Indicators
Process hearings and decisions	Reliable payment processes for payments pursuant to the *Judges Act*	• Accuracy and timeliness of payments

Accuracy and timeliness of payments. The *Judges Act* is an Act respecting all federally appointed judges, and thereby applies to the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada. With respect to the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court the Judges Act specifies the salaries of the Supreme Court judges, and prescribes other payments to be made to judges, namely allowances, removal, meeting, conference and seminars and annuities. The Office of the Registrar processes these payments as required in the *Judges Act*. Direct deposits have been implemented for these payments to improve their timeliness. Accuracy of these payments is monitored on a regular basis.

F. Other indicators

Productive workforce. The key indicators are a motivated, committed and skilled workforce.

- **Motivated, committed workforce.** The most recent Public Service Employee Survey indicated a continued high level of commitment to the organization. Responses were positive across all areas of the survey. Of particular note are responses indicating that 99% of employees responding are strongly committed to making their organization successful and agree that their organization is a good place to work, and that 97% of

respondents are proud of their work units. However, while the overall responses are positive, the Office of the Registrar recognized areas for improvement, and identified three priorities for action: learning and career development, human resource training for employees and managers; and communications between employees and supervisors and from senior management. In order to address these challenges, the Office of the Registrar, along with other member organizations of the HR Co-op under a Collaborative Learning Management Framework project, has trained managers on how to manage learning and define learning needs of their respective branches/sectors. This has enabled employees to link their learning plan activities to the strageic business and operational needs of the organization. Although business and operational needs are important, the Office of the Registrar also recognizes the importance of retaining our staff; to do so, managers are encouraged to support the personal development needs of their employees through their personal learning plan. In building employee learning plans, the communication challenges highlighted above are also addressed.

- **Skilled workforce**. As is the case with many small agencies, the Office of the Registrar has difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff. Historically, recruitment has been difficult for specialty positions, namely among librarians and jurilinguists. Retention is an issue in support categories, as the Office of the Registrar is not able to offer many opportunities for career advancement, and employees leave to obtain promotional opportunities. The Court Modernization program adds to this difficulty with the creation of new responsibilities and new positions. These challenges have been identified and reflected in a staffing plan, and have been further highlighted in the Office of the Registrar's human resource plan. In terms of staffing, plans put in place during the previous fiscal year for the recruitment of new jurilinguists to fill the gaps left by anticipated retirements have been successfully implemented. Additionally, collective staffing for library managers through a shared process between the Department of Justice and the Supreme Court was used successfully in 2007-08. A more formal agreement to undertake collective staffing will be explored through a Memorandum of Understanding with other federal government law libraries in 2008-09. In terms of development of skills, training on the management of learning has been provided to our management team and learning plans were developed for all employees.

- **Sound management**. The key indicator is conformity to the Management Accountability Framework (MAF). The Office of the Registrar has continued to improve its management practices, and carries out a yearly assessment of its practices against the government-wide Management Accountability Framework. During 2007-08, the Office of the Registrar underwent a formal MAF assessment. The overall observations were generally positive, with the Office of the Registrar receiving two strong ratings, 11 acceptable ratings, four opportunities for improvement ratings and two attention required ratings. The areas of management noted as strong were the corporate performance framework and the extra-organizational contribution. Areas for improvement included reporting to Parliament, risk management, information management, information technology management, and the

productive, principled, sustainable and adaptable workforce. The Treasury Board Portfolio identified the latter area as the management improvement priority for the coming year.

III: Supplementary Information

A. Departmental Link to Government of Canada Outcome Areas

Strategic Outcome: To provide the best possible decision-making environment for the Supreme Court of Canada				
	Actual Spending 2007-08 ($ millions)			
	Budgetary	**Non-budgetary**	**Total**	Alignment to Government of Canada Outcome Area
Process hearings and decisions	**30.7**	**0**	**30.7**	Government Affairs

The Supreme Court of Canada is at the apex of the judiciary branch of the Canadian government, and a fundamental institution in the Canadian democracy. It is aligned with the Government Affairs outcome area as found in the Whole of Government Framework, as it supports all other outcome areas.

B. Financial Tables

This section provides an overview of the financial performance using a set of financial tables, the format and table numbers being standard throughout the federal government. All figures reported under "Total Planned Spending", "Total Authorities" and "Total Actual Spending" columns of the Financial Tables correspond to amounts published in the 2007-2008 Main Estimates and in the 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 Public Accounts.

In 2007-2008, only the following financial tables were applicable to the Office of the Registrar:

- Table 1– Comparison of Planned Spending and Full Time Equivalents
- Table 2– Voted and Statutory Items
- Table 15 - Travel Policies
- Table 16 - Financial Statements

Certain other tables are available electronically:

- Sources of Respendable and Non-respendable Revenue
- User Fees
- Details on Project Spending
- Internal Audit and Evaluations

For supplementary information on these items, please visit: http:publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dpr-rmr/2007-2008/index-eng.asp.

Table 1: Comparison of Planned to Actual Spending (including Full Time Equivalents)

($ millions)	2005-06 Actual	2006-07 Actual	2007–2008 Main Estimates	2007–2008 Planned Spending	2007–2008 Total Authorities	2007–2008 Actual
Process hearings and decisions	27.5	29.5	31.8	31.8	33.1	30.7
Total	**27.5**	**29.5**	**31.8**	**31.8**	**33.1**	**30.7**
Less: Non-Respendable revenue	0.3	0.3	N/A	0.2	N/A	0.2
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	5.5	9.0 [1]	N/A	5.5	N/A	9.2[1]
Total Departmental Spending	**32.7**	**38.3**	**N/A**	**37.1**	**N/A**	**39.7**
Full-time Equivalents	**191**	**192**	**N/A**	**191**	**N/A**	**194**

1. During preparation of 2006-2007 financial statements, additional services provided without charge were identified & included in these and subsequent financial statements. For planning purposes, these were reflected for the first time in 2008-09.

Table 2: Voted and Statutory Items

($millions)		2007-2008			
Vote or Statutory Item	Supreme Court of Canada	Main Estimates	Planned Spending	Total Authorities	Actual
50	Operating expenditures	24.5	24.5	25.7	23.3
(S)	Judges' salaries, allowances and annuities, annuities to spouses and children of Judges and lump sum payments to spouses of Judges who die while in office	5.0	5.0	5.1	5.1
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
	Total	**31.8**	**31.8**	**33.1**	**30.7**

Table 6: User Fees/External Fees

Supplementary information on the Supreme Court's external fees can be found at http:/publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dpr-rmr/2007-2008/index-eng.asp.

Table 7: Details on Project Spending

The Supreme Court of Canada has implemented/commenced the following projects during the reporting period:

- Courtroom Audio-Visual / Information Technology / Information Management

Supplementary information on Project Spending can be found at http:/publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dpr-rmr/2007-2008/index-eng.asp.

Table 14: Internal Audits and Evaluations

The Office of the Registrar conducted one internal audit in 2007-08 - an assurance audit on its Information Technology infrastructure.

Supplementary information on this audit can be found at http:/publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dpr-rmr/2007-2008/index-eng.asp.

Table 15: Travel Policies

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada follows TBS Travel Directives, Rates and Allowances.

Table 16: Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accrual accounting principles. The unaudited supplementary information presented in the financial tables in this Departmental Performance Report is prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting in order to be consistent with appropriations-based reporting. Note 3 to the financial statements reconciles these two accounting methods.

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada

Statement of Management Responsibility

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the accompanying financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2008 and all information contained in these statements rests with departmental management. These financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Treasury Board accounting policies which are consistent with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for the public sector.

Management is responsible for the integrity and objectivity of the information in these financial statements. Some of the information in the financial statements is based on management's best estimates and judgment and gives due consideration to materiality. To fulfill its accounting and reporting responsibilities, management maintains a set of accounts that provides a centralized record of the department's financial transactions. Financial information submitted to the *Public Accounts of Canada* and included in the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada's *Departmental Performance Report* is consistent with these financial statements.

Management maintains a system of financial management and internal control designed to provide reasonable assurance that financial information is reliable, that assets are safeguarded and that transactions are in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act*, are executed in accordance with prescribed regulations, within Parliamentary authorities, and are properly recorded to maintain accountability of Government funds. Management also seeks to ensure the objectivity and integrity of data in its financial statements by careful selection, training and development of qualified staff, by organizational arrangements that provide appropriate divisions of responsibility, and by communication programs aimed at ensuring that regulations, policies, standards and managerial authorities are understood throughout the department.

The financial statements of the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada have not been audited.

Anne Roland
Registrar

Ottawa, Ontario

August 8, 2008

Cathy Gaudet
Acting Director General,
Corporate Services

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada
Statement of Operations (unaudited)
For the Year Ended March 31
(in dollars)

	2008	2007
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	22,524,471	21,656,104
Professional services	5,726,627	5,869,189
Accommodation	4,583,620	4,531,860
Amortization of tangible capital assets	1,380,465	1,168,011
Materials, office supplies and equipment	1,838,365	1,060,340
Library materials	1,187,141	1,023,089
Travel	713,080	766,991
Telecommunications services	297,873	363,817
Equipment rentals	189,883	207,999
Repairs and maintenance	192,387	207,935
Printing services	202,425	187,216
Postage and courier	65,153	61,765
Other	66,683	14,370
Total Expenses	38,968,173	37,118,686
Revenues	242,059	261,250
Net cost of operations	38,726,114	36,857,436

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada
Statement of Financial Position (unaudited)
as at March 31
(in dollars)

	2008	2007
Assets		
Financial assets		
Accounts receivable and advances (Note 4)	202,305	349,647
Total financial assets	202,305	349,647
Non-financial assets		
Prepaid expenses	113,536	225,211
Tangible capital assets (Note 5)	8,018,457	6,806,742
Total non-financial assets	8,131,993	7,031,953
TOTAL	8,334,298	7,381,600
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,823,485	2,597,164
Vacation pay and compensatory leave	694,470	660,491
Employee severance benefits (Note 6)	2,431,444	2,313,128
Other liabilities (Note 8)	1,726,154	1,615,120
Total	6,675,553	7,185,903
Equity of Canada	1,658,745	195,697
TOTAL	8,334,298	7,381,600

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada
Statement of Equity of Canada (unaudited)
as at March 31
(in dollars)

	2008	2007
Equity of Canada, beginning of year	**195,697**	(614,447)
Net cost of operations	**(38,726,114)**	(36,857,436)
Current year appropriations used (Note 3)	**30,744,769**	29,544,355
Revenue not available for spending	**(241,930)**	(251,641)
Revenue available for spending in future years	**(137)**	(9,610)
Refund of prior year's expenditures	**(37,077)**	(23,539)
Net change in Consolidated Revenue Fund (Note 3)	**516,098**	(621,083)
Services provided without charge by other government departments (Note 7a)	**9,207,439**	9,029,098
Equity of Canada, end of year	**1,658,745**	**195,697**

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada
Statement of Cash Flow (unaudited)
For the Year Ended March 31
(in dollars)

	2008	2007
Operating activities		
Net cost of operations	**38,726,114**	**36,857,436**
Non-cash items:		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	**(1,380,465)**	(1,168,011)
Gain (loss) on disposal of tangible capital assets	**(8,217)**	9,610
Services provided without charge from other government departments (note 7)	**(9,207,439)**	(9,029,098)
	28,129,993	**26,669,937**
Increase (decrease) in accounts receivable and advances	**(147,342)**	151,883
Increase (decrease) in prepaid expenses	**(111,675)**	18,017
Decrease (increase) in liabilities	**510,350**	(712,518)
Cash used by operating activities	**28,381,326**	**26,127,319**
Capital investment activities		
Acquisitions of tangible capital assets	**2,600,398**	2,520,773
Proceeds from disposal of tangible capital assets	-	(9,610)
Cash used by capital investment activities	**2,600,398**	**2,511,163**
Financing Activities		
Net Cash Provided by Government of Canada	**(30,981,724)**	**(28,638,482)**

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada
Notes to Financial Statements (Unaudited)

1. Authority and objectives

The Supreme Court of Canada was constituted in 1875 by an act of Parliament and is now governed by the *Supreme Court Act*. It is comprised of a Chief Justice and eight puisne judges (puisne meaning ranked after), all appointed by the Governor in Council for terms of "good behaviour", with a minimum of three judges coming from Québec.

The mandate of the Supreme Court of Canada is to have and exercise an appellate, civil and criminal jurisdiction within and throughout Canada. As the final court of appeal, the Supreme Court of Canada serves Canadians by leading the development of common and civil law through its decisions on questions of public importance.

The Supreme Court of Canada is committed to the rule of law; independence and impartiality and accessibility to justice. The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada supports the Supreme Court of Canada by providing responsive administrative services; nurturing the dedication, pride and professionalism of its employees; respecting diversity and linguistic duality and collaborating with other courts and legal institutions.

The Supreme Court of Canada is Canada's highest court and one of its most important national institutions. It hears appeals from courts of appeal of the provinces and territories as well as from the Federal Court of Appeal. In addition, the Supreme Court of Canada is required to give its opinion on any question referred to it by the Governor in Council.

The importance of the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada for Canadian society is well recognized. The Supreme Court of Canada assures uniformity, consistency and correctness in the articulation, development and interpretation of legal principles throughout the Canadian judicial system. Its jurisdiction is derived from the *Supreme Court Act* and other *Acts of Parliament* such as the *Criminal Code*.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Treasury Board accounting policies which are consistent with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for the public sector.

Significant accounting policies are as follows:

(a) Parliamentary appropriations – The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada is financed by the Government of Canada through Parliamentary appropriations. Appropriations provided to the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada do not parallel financial

reporting according to Canadian generally accepted accounting principles since appropriations are primarily based on cash flow requirements. Consequently, items recognized in the statement of operations and in the statement of financial position are not necessarily the same as those provided through appropriations from Parliament. Note 3 provides a high-level reconciliation between the bases of reporting.

(b) Net Cash Provided by Government – The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada operates within the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF), which is administered by the Receiver General for Canada. All cash received by the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada is deposited to the CRF and all cash disbursements made by the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada are paid from the CRF. The net cash provided by Government is the difference between all cash receipts and all cash disbursements including transactions between departments of the federal government.

(c) Change in net position in the Consolidated Revenue Fund is the difference between the net cash provided by Government and appropriations used in a year, excluding the amount of non-respendable revenue recorded by the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada. It results from timing differences between when a transaction affects appropriations and when it is processed through the CRF.

(d) Revenues: Sales and other revenues are accounted for in the period in which the underlying transaction or event occurred that gave rise to the revenues.

(e) Expenses – Expenses are recorded on the accrual basis:

i. Vacation pay and compensatory leave are expensed as the benefits accrue to employees under their respective terms of employment.

ii. Services provided without charge by other government departments for accommodation, the employer's contribution to the health and dental insurance plans, legal services, workers compensation, interpretation services and security services are recorded as operating expenses at their estimated cost.

(f) Employee and federally appointed Supreme Court of Canada judges future benefits

i. Employee pension benefits: Eligible employees participate in the Public Service Pension Plan, a multi employer plan administered by the Government of Canada. The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada's contributions to the Plan are charged to expenses in the year incurred and represent its total obligation to the Plan. Current legislation does not require the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada to make contributions for any actuarial deficiencies of the Plan.

ii. Employee severance benefits: Employees are entitled to severance benefits under labour contracts or conditions of employment. These benefits are accrued as employees

render the services necessary to earn them. The obligation relating to the benefits earned by employees is calculated using information derived from the results of the actuarially determined liability for employee severance benefits for the Government as a whole.

iii. Federally appointed Supreme Court of Canada judges pension benefits: Eligible federally appointed judges and their survivors are entitled to fully indexed annuities providing that the judges meet minimum age and service requirements. The main benefits paid from this plan are recorded on a pay-as-you-go basis. They are included in the Statement of Operations as a component of salaries and benefits and the judges' contributions are credited to revenue. Contributions made by the Office and judges pertaining to the portion of the plan that relates to indexation of benefits is recorded in a Supplementary Retirement Benefits Account, which is presented on the Statement of Financial Position as part of Other liabilities, with additional detail provided in Note 8. The Office's contribution towards indexation is expensed at the time it is accrued in the Account in accordance with the legislation. The actuarial liability associated with the Judges Pension Plan is recorded in the financial statements of the Government of Canada, the ultimate sponsor of the plan.

(***g) Accounts and advances receivable*** are stated at amounts expected to be ultimately realized; a provision is made for receivables where recovery is considered uncertain.

(h) Contingent liabilities – Contingent liabilities are potential liabilities which may become actual liabilities when one or more future events occur or fail to occur. To the extent that the future event is likely to occur or fail to occur, and a reasonable estimate of the loss can be made, an estimated liability is accrued and an expense recorded. If the likelihood is not determinable or an amount cannot be reasonably estimated, the contingency is disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

(i) Tangible capital assets – All tangible capital assets and leasehold improvements having an initial cost of $5,000 or more are recorded at their acquisition cost. The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada has many works of art and historically significant assets such as rare books, paintings, busts, clocks and other works of art. In accordance with Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat policy, these values are not capitalized as they are considered non-operational heritage assets. Intangible assets are not capitalized.

Amortization of tangible capital assets is done on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful life of the asset as follows:

Asset Class	Amortization Period
Machinery and equipment	5 to 10 years
Office furniture and equipment	5 to 10 years
Computer equipment	3 years
Computer software	3 years
Motor vehicles	3 years
Leasehold improvements	5 years
Assets under construction	Once in service, in accordance with asset type.

(j) Measurement uncertainty – The preparation of these financial statements in accordance with Treasury Board accounting policies which are consistent with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for the public sector requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses reported in the financial statements. At the time of preparation of these statements, management believes the estimates and assumptions to be reasonable. The most significant items where estimates are used are the liability for employee severance benefits, allowances for employee vacation and compensatory benefits, prepaid expenses, employer's contribution to health and dental insurance plans and the useful life of tangible capital assets. Actual results could significantly differ from those estimated. Management's estimates are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary, they are recorded in the financial statements in the year they become known.

3. Parliamentary Appropriations

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada receives all of its funding through annual Parliamentary appropriations. Items recognized in the statement of operations and the Statement of Financial Position in one year may be funded through Parliamentary appropriations in prior, current or future years. Accordingly, the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada has different net results of operations for the year on a government funding basis than on an accrual accounting basis. The differences are reconciled in the following tables:

(a) Reconciliation of net cost of operations to current year appropriations used:	**2008**	**2007**
	(in dollars)	(in dollars)
Net cost of operations	38,726,114	36,857,436
Adjustments for items affecting net cost of operations but not affecting appropriations		
Add (Less):		
Services provided without charge from other government departments	(9,207,439)	(9,029,098)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	(1,380,465)	(1,168,011)
Legal services provided by the Department of Justice	-	(3,689)
Refund of prior years expenditures	37,077	23,539
Revenue not available for spending	241,930	251,641
Gain (loss) on disposal of capital assets	(8,217)	9,610
Increase - Vacation and compensatory leave	(33,979)	(20,246)
Decrease (increase) - Employee severance benefits	(118,316)	84,208
Other	(659)	175
Adjustments for items not affecting net cost of operations but affecting appropriations		
Add (Less):		
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	2,600,398	2,520,773
Increase - Prepaid expenses	(111,675)	18,017
Current year appropriations used	30,744,769	29,544,355

(b) Appropriations provided and used

	2008 (in dollars)	2007 (in dollars)
Vote 50 - Operating expenditures	25,659,109	23,462,350
Contributions to employee benefits plan	2,281,627	2,159,231
Judge salaries, allowances and annuities	5,169,897	5,366,935
Spending of amounts equivalent to proceeds from disposal of capital assets	9,747	29,261
	33,120,380	31,017,777
Less:		
Lapsed appropriations: Operating	(1,680,864)	(1,451,930)
Proceeds from disposal of assets	(9,610)	(11,882)
	(1,690,474)	(1,463,812)
Available for spending in future years	(685,137)	(9,610)
Total appropriations used	**30,744,769**	**29,544,355**

(c) Reconciliation of net cash provided by Government to current year appropriations used:

	2008 (in dolairs)	2007 (in dollars)
Net cash provided by Government	30,981,724	28,638,482
Revenue not available for spending	241,930	251,641
Proceeds available for use in future years	137	9,610
Refund of prior years expenditures	37,077	23,539
Other	(1)	-
	31,260,867	28,923,272
Change in net position in the Consolidated Revenue Fund		
Variation in account receivable and advances	147,342	(151,883)
Variation in account payable and accrued liabilities	(773,679)	678,590
Variation in other liabilities	111,034	97,890
Legal services provided by the Department of Justice	-	(3,689)
Other adjustments	(795)	175
	(516,098)	621,083
Current year appropriations used	30,744,769	29,544,355

4. Accounts Receivable and Advances

The following table presents details of the accounts receivable:

	2008 (in dollars)	2007 (in dollars)
Receivable from other Federal Government departments and agencies	186,038	313,323
Receivables from external parties	14,303	34,578
Standing advances	2,400	2,401
	202,741	350,302
Less: allowance for doubtful accounts on external receivables	436	655
Total	202,305	349,647

5. Tangible Capital Assets

(in dollars)

	Cost				Accumulated amortization				2008 Net Book Value	2007 Net Book Value
Capital asset class	Opening balance	Acquisitions	Disposals	Closing balance	Opening balance	Amortization	Disposals	Closing balance		
Machinery and equipment	568,345	388,323	-	956,668	148,016	93,619	-	241,635	715,033	420,329
Office furniture and equipment	1,388,394	326,062	27,395	1,687,061	971,934	90,672	19,177	1,043,429	643,632	416,460
Computer equipment	355,211	288,532	-	643,743	282,324	87,933	-	370,257	273,486	72,887
Computer software	576,022	48,499	-	624,521	176,205	52,493	-	228,698	395,823	399,817
Motor vehicles	164,229	24,909	-	189,138	127,827	24,505	-	152,332	36,806	36,402
Leasehold Improvements	4,683,119	4,034,753	-	8,717,872	2,035,495	1,031,243	-	3,066,738	5,651,134	2,647,624
Assets under construction	2,813,223	(2,510,680)	-	302,543	-	-	-	-	302,543	2,813,223
Total	10,548,543	2,600,398	27,395	13,121,546	3,741,801	1,380,465	19,177	5,103,089	8,018,457	6,806,742

Amortization expense for the year ended March 31, 2008 is $1,380,465 (2007 - $1,168,011).

6. Employee Benefits

(a) Pension benefits: The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada's employees participate in the Public Service Pension Plan, which is sponsored and administered by the Government of Canada. Pension benefits accrue up to a maximum period of 35 years at a rate of 2 percent per year of pensionable service, times the average of the best five consecutive years of earnings. The benefits are integrated with Canada/Québec Pension Plans benefits and they are indexed to inflation.

Both the employees and the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada contribute to the cost of the Plan. The 2006-07 expense amounts to $1,591,353 ($1,675,944 in 2005-06), which represents approximately 2.2 times (2.6 in 2005-2006) the contributions by employees.

The Office's responsibility with regard to the Plan is limited to its contributions. Actuarial surpluses or deficiencies are recognized in the financial statements of the Government of Canada, as the Plan's sponsor.

(b) Severance benefits: The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada provides severance benefits to its employees based on eligibility, years of service and final salary. These severance benefits are not pre-funded. Benefits will be paid from future appropriations. Information about the severance benefits, measured as at March 31, is as follows:

	2008	2007
	(in dollars)	
Accrued benefit obligation, beginning of year	2,313,128	2,397,337
Expense for the year	266,308	75,837
Benefits paid during the year	(147,992)	(160,046)
Accrued benefit obligation, end of year	2,431,444	2,313,128

7. Related Party Transactions

The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada is related as a result of common ownership to all Government of Canada departments, agencies, and Crown corporations. The Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada enters into transactions with these entities in the normal course of business and on normal trade terms. Also, during the year, the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada received services which were obtained without charge from other Government departments as presented in part (a).

(a) Services provided without charge:

During the year the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada received services without charge from other government departments. These services without charge have been recognized in the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada's Statement of Operations as follows:

	2008	2007
	(in dollars)	
Accommodation	4,583,620	4,531,860
Employer's contribution to the health and dental insurance plans	1,293,363	1,263,820
Legal Services	-	12,458
Worker's compensation cost provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	43,703	41,935
Interpretation services provided by PWGSC	167,430	83,025
Security services provided by the RCMP	3,119,323	3,096,000
	9,207,439	9,029,098

The Government has structured some of its administrative activities for efficiency and cost-effectiveness purposes so that one department performs these on behalf of all without charge. The costs of these services, which include payroll and cheque issuance services provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada are not included as an expense in the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada's Statement of Operations.

(b) Payables and receivables outstanding at year-end with related parties:

	2008	2007
	(in dollars)	
Accounts receivable with other government departments and agencies	186,038	313,323
Accounts payable to other government departments and agencies	253,751	512,786

8. Other Liabilities

The following table presents details of other liabilities:

	2008	2007
		(in dollars)
Trust Account - Security Deposit		
Liability, beginning of year	385,993	394,091
Deposits	5,500	3,000
Interest	2,317	2,854
Reimbursements	(2,678)	(13,952)
Liability, end of year	391,132	385,993
Supplementary Retirement Benefit Account (SRBA)		
Liability, beginning of year	1,229,127	1,123,139
Deposits	54,444	58,953
Interest	51,451	47,035
Liability, end of year	1,335,022	1,229,127
Total	**1,726,154**	**1,615,120**

Security deposit account was established to record security to the value of $500 deposited by an Appellant with the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada in accordance with paragraph 60(1)(b) of the *Supreme Court Act*. As per section 87 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Canada, interest is paid on money deposited as security.

Supplementary Retirement Benefit Account ("SRBA") records contributions made by Supreme Court of Canada Judges and the matching contributions made by the Employer in accordance with the *SRBA Act* and the *Judges Act*.

IV: Other items of Interest

A. For Further Information

Supreme Court of Canada Building 301 Wellington Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0J1 World Wide Web: **http://www.scc-csc.gc.ca**	**General Enquiries** **Telephone: (613) 995-4330** **Fax: (613) 996-3063** **Internet Access: reception@scc-csc.gc.ca**
Anne Roland - Registrar Telephone: (613) 996-9277	**E-mail: reception@scc-csc.gc.ca**
Louise Meagher - Deputy Registrar Telephone: (613) 996-7521	**E-mail: registry-greffe@scc-csc.gc.ca**
Lynn Potter - A/Director General, Corporate Services Telephone: (613) 996-0429	**E-mail: potterl@scc-csc.gc.ca**

B. Listing of Statutory and Departmental Reports

Supreme Court Reports

Pursuant to Section 17 of the *Supreme Court Act*, the Registrar or the Deputy Registrar, as the Chief Justice directs, reports and publishes the judgments of the Court in the Supreme Court Reports, which include all the reasons for judgment rendered by the Court in a given calendar year.

C. Legislation Administered

Supreme Court Act	**R.S.C., 1985, as amended**
Judges Act	**R.S.C., 1985, as amended**